

Interperformative Relationships in Ingrian Oral Poetry

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[Transcriptions and audio excerpts of sung materials are available at
<http://journal.oraltradition.org/issues/25ii/kallio>]

The Baltic-Finnic ethnic groups used trochaic tetrameter called Kalevala-meter in their oral poetry. These ethnic groups included the Finns, Karelians, Estonians, Izhors, Votes, and Ingrian-Finns. The present name of this poetic meter¹ derives from the Finnish national epic, *The Kalevala* (1835), which was compiled by Elias Lönnrot on the basis of folk poems. Kalevala-metric poetry was mainly sung, though it served as a vehicle for proverbs embedded in speech and recited charms. This form was the central poetic language of these groups, used in epic, lyric, ritual, and occasional songs. The very first sources derive from the sixteenth century, while the largest corpora were collected in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



Map 1: Ingria, Estonia, Finland, Karelia, and Russia.

One of the extensively documented geographical areas of Kalevala-metric oral poetry is Ingria, and in all of Ingria the majority of the sound-recordings were collected from the western districts of Soikkola and Narvusi. Beginning in 1853, many scholars traveled in West Ingria to record the predominantly female singing culture, first manually and later by using sound recording technologies. The Ingrian practices, structures, and stylistics of singing were varied, and this area is often referred as a counterpart to or a point of comparison for Karelian singing of a more male and epic character (Gröndahl 1997; Siikala 2000).

In recent years, new insights have created opportunities to understand the massive archival collections from Ingria as textualized products of communicative, situational, varying singing practices.

¹ Kalevala-meter is called *regivärs* in Estonian and *kalevalamitta* in Finnish. This poetic genre is often referred to as Kalevalaic, Kalevala, or Kalevala-meter poetry, but sometimes also runic poetry or rune-singing, though it is not connected to the Scandinavian runic alphabet. I use the term Kalevala-metric poetry here to stand for both the Estonian *regilaul* and the Finnish-Karelian *runolaulu*, although the term is somewhat anachronistic and no consensus has been reached on its status.

Studies on the forms, uses, and meanings of Kalevala-metric poetry have been published by the Finnish researchers Lauri Harvilahti (1992a; 1994; 2004), Heikki Laitinen (2004; 2006), Lotte Tarkka (1996; 2005), and Senni Timonen (2000; 2004), while Anna-Leena Siikala (1994; 2000) has highlighted the regional differences among typical singing practices in Finnish, Karelian, and Ingrian oral poetry. For the scope of this article, other noteworthy scholars are the Estonian researchers Janika Oras (2004; 2008) and Taive Särg (2000), as they have connected the analysis of textual, contextual, and musical aspects when studying Estonian traditions. These studies are connected to larger discussions of several partly overlapping lines of thought for understanding the dynamics of various oral traditions discussed by John Miles Foley (1995; 2002).²

The aim of this article is twofold: to introduce the Ingrian poetic singing culture, which is often referred to when discussing Kalevala-metric poetry, and to discuss aspects of performance and intertextuality. The central point here is to highlight that the meanings of a song are created on the various levels of performance; not only is the text itself worth studying, but likewise the other performance features, such as musical structures, singing conventions, and performance situations warrant analysis. After referring to the most central theoretical thoughts and concepts, I will introduce the geographical area and then proceed to a general portrait of Ingrian Kalevala-metric poetry with its typical contexts and conventions of use. As case studies, I will first discuss the interperformative relationships and situational stylistics of West Ingrian swinging songs³ and lullabies, and then focus on the various uses of one poetic theme, *The Sad Widow*. With this general introduction of Ingrian oral poetry and the treatment of some particular cases, I hope to draw a picture of some aspects of situational variation and referentiality in performance.

Performance and Intertextuality

The meaning of a song is not entirely in the text. Richard Bauman was one of the early scholars who launched the interest in performance (1977:9):

In other words, in an artistic performance of this kind, there is something going on in the communicative interchange which says to the auditor, “interpret what I say in some special sense: do not take it to mean what the words alone, taken literally, would convey.” This may lead to the further suggestion that performance sets up, or represents, an interpretive frame within which the messages being communicated are to be understood, and that this frame contrasts with at least one other frame, the literal.

² On performance theory, see Bauman 1977, 2004; Bauman and Briggs 1990; Briggs and Bauman 1992; and Reichl 2000. On ethnopoeitics, see Tedlock 1983; Hymes 1981; see also Anttonen 1994; on immanent art, see Foley 1991; see also DuBois 2006. On some relevant aspects of ethnomusicology, see Feld 1990, Nettl 1983, Niemi 1998, and Niemi and Lapsui 2004.

³ Swinging songs were an Ingrian local genre that included both epic and lyric poems and was used while passing time in huge outdoor swings. At springtime feasts, both the adults and the young people participated in swinging and singing, while later on in the summer it was mainly an amusement for young people.

As Bauman observed (16), to mark a particular interpretive frame, the performance may then be keyed on various levels: “special codes, figurative language, parallelism, special paralinguistic features, special formulae, appeal to tradition, disclaimer of performance,” and so on, the use of which varies according to genre and tradition (Foley 2002:79-94). Following Foley (1995:47-49, 79-82), the interpretive frame associated with or evoked by certain types of performances, genres, or poems may be called a *performance arena*. When the audience knows the poetic language, system of genres, and the wider backgrounds of a particular performance, it is possible to interpret even vague or partial references by the singer. As a consequence, a single word or gesture may activate larger interpretive frames or narrative structures in the minds of a competent audience. Yet, the audience is never homogenous: individual competence, previous experiences, and personal attitudes direct the possibilities for interpretations, and this also applies to the researcher (Foley 1991; Geertz 1973).

The aim here is to investigate the various levels of performance in order to gain some understanding of the manifold relations and cross-references between Ingrian songs. The meanings of a song may be created by using or referring to words, song structures, melodies, rhythms, tones of voices, or gestures, and this all happens in interaction with a particular audience in a particular place and time (Harvilahti 1998:200-03; Reichl 2000; Tedlock 1983). The term *intertextuality* is often used when discussing the relations between poems or poetic genres (Briggs and Bauman 1992; Tarkka 2005:61-72). Bauman also employs the term *interdiscursive*, which helps to avoid the textual impressions associated with the previous term (2004:2):

The perspective that I am suggesting here is founded upon a conception of a social life as discursively constituted, produced and reproduced in situated acts of speaking and other signifying practices that are simultaneously anchored in their situational contexts of use and transcendent of them, linked by interdiscursive ties to other situations, other acts, other utterances. The sociohistorical continuity and coherence manifested in these interdiscursive relationships rests upon cultural repertoires of concepts and practices that serve as conventionalized orienting frameworks for the production, reception and circulation of discourse.

The term *interdiscursive* fits well into oral contexts, since the textual side of an utterance is always combined with various non-textual aspects. Lee Haring (1988:365) has used the concept of *interperformance* to refer to “the relation of inclusion which connects storytelling events to the various types of discourse which engendered them.” Since the concept of performance is the most central here, I am adopting the term *interperformativity* for the purposes of this article to refer to relations between performances. These relations take place on various levels: textual, musical, stylistic (involving voice production, tempo, and intonation), gestural, and so forth. Thus, I am not adopting this term in an Austinian sense by referring to the power of performances, but simply to refer to “something between performances” or “something referring to or deriving from earlier or typical performances.” Similarly, the term *performative* in this article means simply “something relating to performance.” The word *performance* here refers both to performances that are elevated, highlighted, or full (Bauman 1977) and to informal or partial renditions of a poem.

The learning of singing culture begins during the early interaction of a child with the people who take care of him or her (Tarkka 2005:101), and the text and melodies are not the only aspects that he or she needs to learn. The foundation of the internalized understanding of the singing culture is the whole language and aesthetics of singing: how is the text created and varied, which themes are reproduced more conservatively, which may be transformed more freely, and which are often or nearly always linked together? How is voice produced, how are melodies and rhythms used, how are they varied and how not? How does one move one's body, or react to and speak about the various kinds of songs? When one learns the basics, it is easy to sing one's own versions, learn more songs, or make new ones. In an oral singing culture, a song is often learned from several distinct performances and performers, not from one single source (Saarinen 1994).

To grasp the multi-level variation of poems and melodies in the corpus of Ingrian poetry, I will make practical use of the terms *formula*, poetic *theme*, and *poem*. By *formula*, I refer to the shorter units containing similar lexical, semantic, and syntactic elements often used for similar purposes. In musical formulas, these elements are melodic and rhythmic. *Theme* refers to those sections consisting of several verses with similar content and form, whereas *poem* refers to a longer recognizable textual entity, but is also used as a synonym for (a text of) one song. These concepts are flexible tools, and in some cases, I will use both *formula* and *theme*, or *theme* and *poem* nearly interchangeably, since the limits between these are, with Ingrian material at least, typically open to various scholarly interpretations (Timonen 2000:634; Harvilahti 1992a: 141-42).⁴

Multicultural Ingria

Ingria is a Russian area situated between St. Petersburg and Estonia on the coast of the Gulf of Finland (see map 1 above). The first known inhabitants were Votes, a Baltic-Finnic group speaking a language somewhat similar to Estonian. The other early people in the area were Izhors, also a Baltic-Finnic group, whose language is closer to Karelian. Both groups were in contact with Slavic groups from at least the twelfth century onwards: they were slowly converted to the Greek Orthodox religion, and the area first came under Novgorodian rule and later, Moscovian rule. Sweden conquered Ingria in 1617, and significant portions of the indigenous population of Izhors and Votes were either killed or fled behind the retreating borders of Russia. New inhabitants immigrated from eastern Finland and the Karelian Isthmus, both of which were a part of Sweden at the time. The newcomers formed ethnic groups according to their region of origin. The Ingrian-Finns were Lutheran, which was the official religion of Sweden from the sixteenth century on. The Izhors and Votes, who were Orthodox, had difficulties practicing their religion under Swedish rule. Aleksej Krjukov (1993) has estimated that during this period, many Izhors and Votes were converted to Lutheranism and were counted as Ingrian-Finns thereafter. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Russia re-conquered Ingria, and Peter the Great founded

⁴ See Foley 1990:278-84, 311-12, 327-28; 1991; 2002:48; Harvilahti 1992a; 1992b; 1994; 2004; Saarinen 1994; and also Lippus 1995:48,71; Lord 1960.

St. Petersburg in the eastern part of Ingria, in the middle of the Ingrian-Finn and Izhorian populations. This led to a significant new Russian population settling in Ingria.⁵

Different Baltic-Finnic ethnic groups of Ingria—Votes, Izhors, and Ingrian-Finns, as well as some immigrant Finnish and Estonians—sang Kalevala-metric poems in various ways and languages. These poems had some common and some distinct features; some poems were local, others were learned and translated from each other. The amount of interaction between groups seems to have varied in time and space. In addition to Baltic-Finnic groups and Russians, there were also some Germans, Swedes, and Gypsies in the region. For the most part, these groups remained separate: serfdom restricted population movement until 1861, and the boundary between the Lutheran and Orthodox groups was quite distinct. However, the evidence also suggests interethnic marriages, Gypsies mediating Finnish songs to Izhors, or Russians learning Izhorian poems in Soikkola villages.⁶ Contacts between these groups also reflect their languages. For example, the Izhorian dialects of Western Ingria contain a significant number of Russian, Estonian, and Votic loan words (Nirvi 1971:IV).⁷

Collecting Ingrian Songs

From 1809 to 1917, Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia, and scholars of this period had easy access to Ingrian and Karelian areas. Most of the Ingrian poems were collected during that time. From 1853 to 1938, over twenty scholars visited West Ingria. For the purposes of this article, the work of some of those scholars is particularly important. For instance, Vihtori Alava collected a rich corpus of poems, stories, and ethnographic information at the end of the nineteenth century, whereas Armas Launis made a notable phonograph recording of some 200 melodies from western and central Ingria in 1906. Another important scholar, Väinö Salminen, visited the area in 1906, 1930, and 1931, and wrote several monographs on Ingrian poetry.

Between the First and the Second World War, many Finnish and Estonian scholars visited the westernmost villages of Ingria, which were on the Estonian side of the border at that time. In particular, Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio documented more information on the contexts and uses of the songs than the earlier collectors had accomplished. Moreover, Aili and Lauri Laiho were particularly interested in the singing practices and in 1937 they even took six singers to be recorded for the Finnish Literature Society at the Estonian radio station in Tallinn. The early

⁵ See Harvilahti 1992a:95; Nenola 2002:54-58; Nevalainen and Sihvo 1991; Västriik 2007.

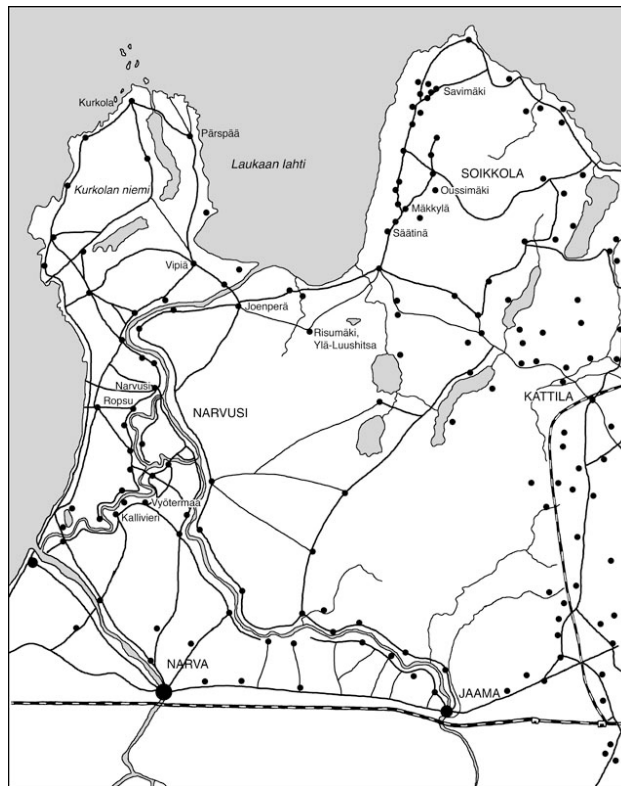
⁶ SKS KRA Alava XIII:159-60 and VII B 1882:167; Porkka 1886:158.

⁷ See Anttonen 1987; Harvilahti 1992a:17-18; Heinonen 2005:11-16; Laiho 1940; Nevalainen and Sihvo 1991; Timonen 2004:84-87.

collections from West Ingria include over 6,000 poems, 400 short notations, 200 short phonograph recordings, and 44 entire songs on shellac disks.⁸

After the Second World War, Ingria was modernized and, to a degree, emptied of Baltic-Finnic groups; as a consequence, the social occasions for Kalevala-metric singing disappeared. Later, some poems were recorded from the refugees who moved to Finland and Sweden, but the most important collections of the time are recordings made by Soviet (mainly Estonian, Karelian, and Ingrian) researchers beginning in the 1950s.⁹ When Finnish researchers visited the Soikkola villages again in 1991, only a few old people were able to sing short parts of Kalevala-metric songs: mostly they sang newer Russian and some Finnish folksongs.¹⁰

Regarding collected poems and melodies, one of the most interesting Ingrian areas is the Soikkola peninsula. This region has the highest density of Izhorian villages, with Votic villages to the south and Ingrian-Finn villages to the east. Collectors of both texts and melodies have praised the Izhors of Soikkola for their songs. This area was in contact with Izhorian villages of Narvusi in the West and Hevaa in the east, and it also influenced the Votes and Ingrian-Finns of the area.¹¹



Map 2: The villages of the West Ingria.

Processes of Textualization

For a collector, performance often differs from an inter-group performance. This has led researchers to question its value or validity as being representative of typical, true, or traditional performances. This central question has been approached by Richard Bauman (1977:8): “How many of the texts in our collections represent recordings of informants’ abstracts, résumés, or

⁸ A significant part of the textual material was published in the first half of the twentieth century (SKVR) and is now available on a public database (www.finlit.fi/skvr), but the sound recordings have been used very little in research. On the history of collections, see Nenola 2002:83-91, 866-76; Heinonen 2005:22-24; Järvinen 1990; Launis 1910a; SKVR III.

⁹ See Gomon 1977; Kiuru et al. 1974; Laanest 1966; Rüütel 1977.

¹⁰ See Asplund 1992; Harvilahti 1991:220-21; Nevalainen and Sihvo 1991.

¹¹ Harvilahti 1992:14-18; Heinonen 2005:11-16; Laiho 1940.

reports of performance and performance forms, rather than true performances?” However, as Senni Timonen has suggested (2004:288; Bauman 2004:10; Tarkka 2005:101), a song performed for the collector also qualifies as a performance—a performance of a special kind, produced in a particular situation that is not culturally typical. The singer adapts his or her knowledge of the poetic tradition to an unusual context: the recorded performance refers to and builds on the competence acquired through the earlier performances, while some variation emerging in the recording situation is of a universal character. Depending on the ongoing interaction, the singer may then realize the song as a résumé or partial rendition,¹² explain more than she would probably do when performing to a native audience,¹³ be inspired to an elevated, full performance,¹⁴ or perform something that she has probably never done before.¹⁵ Due to these possible variations, the analysis needs to be more layered.

When using archival material, particular emphasis must be given to the situations where the songs were recorded and on the collectors’ and informants’ aspirations. In other words, how does a particular situation, the interaction and the interests of the participants, and the technology used all influence the recorded performance? In some cases, the archival material includes diaries, additional notes, travel reports, and so forth, all of which make answering this question easier.¹⁶ In other cases, the only possibility is to consider the overall character of the materials produced by one collector or one singer, and to compare that corpus with the materials recorded from other persons, periods, or areas. This comparison helps to form an idea of how the interaction may have influenced a particular performance and its documentation.

If a singer is unaccustomed to recording, the situation may contribute to his or her experiencing serious performance anxiety. The folk music researcher Armas Otto Väisänen recounts an occasion when he once had to stop his phonograph after each line of an Ingrian lament¹⁷ because the presence of an unfamiliar machine made the singer too nervous to remember the improvisational phrases she normally performed without difficulty.¹⁸ In fact, the mere presence of a stranger without any technical equipment could result in the same effect. Lauri Laiho wrote down Tatjana Jegorov’s impressions of collectors (SKS KRA L. Laiho 5422):

¹² Harvilahti 2004:201; e.g., SKVR III:1879; compare SKVR III:959 with III:1905.

¹³ See, e.g., SKRV III:2079; 2170.

¹⁴ As may be felt with many collected texts and heard on some tapes, e.g., SKSÄ L 87-101.

¹⁵ See Heinonen 2008b.

¹⁶ Harvilahti 2004; Heinonen 2005:22-46; Oras 2008.

¹⁷ The other main poetic genre in Ingria and Karelia was the lament, which was used particularly in funeral and wedding rites, but also on other occasions. The metric and musical structures of the laments were looser than those found in the Kalevala-metric poetry, a poetic language that was more complex, and the overall character of laments was more improvisational (Nenola 2002). The third main genre was the newer rhymed, strophic folksong (Asplund 1992; Timonen 2004:257). These two genres differed from Kalevala-metric songs in meter, structure, poetic language, melody, and characteristics of the performance. In fact, the singers themselves saw these genres as separate categories, though in some rarely recorded cases a poem may have begun as a Kalevala-metric song and have ended as a lament or a rhymed folksong (SKS KRA A. Laiho 3247; Sääski 5009).

¹⁸ SKS KRA Väisänen e:15.

Tatjana said she had been very shy of her Finnish guests [Lauri and Aili Laiho] at first, but after the recording trip to Tallinn, now “we are such friends.” Then she said of [an earlier meeting with] the university student Niemi: “well, what could I do, when the strange man arrives, I just put up my guard and kept my eyes wide open and was afraid—said two or three songs—I just waited for him to go away.”

From this testimony, it is no wonder that Lauri Laiho was the one who recorded the most and the best of Tatjana’s poems. Collectors often remark about the fear and even anger of the local people: for them, it was difficult to be sure why all these poems and information were being collected. The depth of local peoples’ suspicions often depended both on the skills of the collector and the varying political atmospheres, but similar stories of mistrust have been recorded from 1858 to the 1950s (Niemi 1904:270-310; Ariste 2005:67). Performers who exhibit fear and anxiety may shorten their songs, decrease the amount of textual and melodic variation, or change their voice production, although some experienced singers may not face these problems at all. Yet even the shortened versions are valuable because they build on the foundations of earlier and culturally typical performances. The singer is using his or her familiar poetic language in an unusual context.

Not all people wanted to be recorded, nor did all songs interest collectors, either. Since the early scholars were mainly seeking old epic poems similar to those in the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, they were not always content with the personal, lyric, and ballad-like poems that the Ingrians preferred. Moreover, most of the collectors clearly did not want to record all the genres that were offered to them, such as the rhymed folksongs, Russian songs, and various kinds of obscene or mocking songs (Gröndahl 1997:31-46; Niemi 1904:358-59, 400).

Nevertheless, there were enough collectors with sufficiently diverse interests to collect a relatively thick corpus¹⁹ of Ingrian poetry (Timonen 2000). As with any archival material, not all questions can be answered by this collection. But some of the interpretative gaps may still be surpassed by comparing the corpora generated by different individuals in different times and places, and by trying to situate the poems in the particular contexts of their recording, as far as it is possible. Since this corpus of songs was collected according to diverse interests across a period of approximately one hundred years, it provides a fine opportunity to characterize some of the consistent features and underlying patterns of the Ingrian singing cultures.

Ingrian Oral Poetry

The Kalevala-meter, with its various regional features, is one of the oldest known Finnish, Estonian, Karelian, and Ingrian poetic meters, and it was very widely used: for epic, lyric, festive songs, wedding songs, mocking songs, lullabies, dancing, working songs, and so forth (Kuusi 1994). This meter was embedded in speech as proverbs and quotations, recited as

¹⁹ Lauri Honko (2000:16) describes thick corpora in a following way: “Their time span may be short and their geographic scope limited, but the frequency of the folklore expressions studied may be high, i.e. the same story will be documented several times from one or more performers. Such thick corpuses make organic variation visible.”

charms or incantations, but was used predominantly in songs. The poems make use of parallelism and alliteration, but not rhyme or strophic form. Depending on the geographical area, they were sung in many ways: as a solo, as alternating between two singers, all together, or in an alternation of lead singer and chorus. Technically, any text could be sung with any melody in any situation, but there seem to have been regional propensities toward typical combinations.²⁰ Though many features were common to wide geographical areas, every area had its own distinctive conventions. For instance, in Ingria various forms of dance and ritualized walking were often used in the performance of Kalevala-metric songs.²¹

In the Ingrian poems, lyric and lyrical epic features were dominant, though there were also many festive, ritual, and occasional poems, ballads, legends, and even some epic and mythical poems. Lauri Harvilahti (1992a:69-86; 1994:96-98; cf. Siikala 2000:273) characterizes Ingrian lyrical epic as being personalized, often tragic poetry linked to love or family relationships and to the concrete environment of the singers. These features, especially the use of the first person, also appear in many Ingrian lyric and epic poems, and only very few poems can be counted as being a heroic epic (Siikala 1994:27-29). “Nowhere is the boundary between [Kalevala-metric] epic and lyric as vacillating as in Ingria,” observes Senni Timonen; she continues: “the boundaries are also broken between . . . genres which are expressively and stylistically completely different” (2004:85).

The Kalevala-meter has been called a trochaic tetrameter, though it is defined by both the length of the syllables and by their stress (Leino 1994; Kuusi 1994). As such, it is deeply rooted in the structures of Baltic-Finnic languages, and the different forms it takes within different areas are connected to the differences in dialect and language (Sarv 2008; Laitinen 2006:53; Lauerma 2002). The meter is syllabic: the last three feet consist of two syllables each, whereas the number of syllables in the first foot may vary from two to four.²²

Especially in Ingria, the sung poetic line may occur in variant forms. For example, the verses could proceed directly from one to the next, be repeated in sequences of one or two verses, or be augmented by various forms of partial repetitions. In addition, some short words or syllables may be inserted, the last syllable of the verse may be omitted, or refrains of various lengths may be added or used instead of repeating the verses.²³ In West Ingrian songs, the basic line “what should I rise to sing” (“mitä noisen laulamahan”) was a common beginning formula that was not connected to any particular situation but was used with various lyric and epic

²⁰ See, e.g., Käppi 2007; Launis 1907; Oras 2008; Särg 2000; Virtanen 1968.

²¹ See Enäjärvi-Haavio 1949; Siikala 2000; and also Siikala et al. 2004; Siikala and Vakimo 1994.

²² Basically, the meter has two main types of line with many variations. The first type, which is referred to as *normal trochee*, is divided by a caesura in the middle of the line: La ka | kat-son || lie-ku-|a-ni. In the other type, which is referred to as *broken line*, the caesura is omitted: Kä-si-|puut kä-||lyi-sen | teh-ty. The number of these line-types in a poem is usually equal, but they occur randomly (see Laitinen 2004). In Baltic-Finnic languages, the main stress lies on the first syllable of the word or part of a compound. For that reason, long syllables with primary stress should be situated at the rise of a foot (with exception of the first foot), whereas a short syllable with primary stress should be placed in the fall, and the placement of syllables without primary stress is unrestricted.

²³ See IRS, the main published collection of Ingrian melodies.

1. Mitä noisen laulamahan (What Shall I Rise to Sing)

Unknown singer
Sainio, Soikkola, Ingria
Transcribed by Armas Launis in 1903
SiBa 189, IRS 61
Reinterpreted from the manuscript
by Kati Heinonen



Example 1.

5. Mitä noisen laulamahan (What Shall I Rise to Sing)

Unknown singer
Vyyttemaa, Narvusi, Ingria
Transcribed by Armas Launis in 1903
SiBa 7, IRS 80
Reinterpreted from the manuscript
by Kati Heinonen



Example 5.

2. La ka katson liekkuvani (Let Me See My Swing)

Liphoi Jyväskylän and chorus
Sainio, Soikkola, Ingria
Recorded by Armas Launis in 1906
SKS 30677a, IRS 781
Transcribed by Kati Heinonen



Example 2.

themes.²⁴ It was often followed by the parallel verse “whom should I rise to cuckoo” (“kuta noisen kukkumahan”). The line could take, for example, some of the following textual forms:

Mitä noisen laulamahan (IRS 61; see example 1);

Mitä noisen laulamahan *joe oi*, laulamahan *jo* (IRS 80; see example 5);

Oi, mitä noisen *vaa* laulamahan, laulamahan (IRS 864);

Mitä noisen laulamaa, kuta noisen kukkumaa; *hee* kukkumahan *hoilee* (IRS 471);

These units may then be repeated, sung independently, or divided between the lead singer and chorus. Moreover, one textual structure of this kind could be connected to various rhythmic and melodic structures. In Ingrian melodies, the musical structures were also flexible, so that one melodic pattern could be combined with several rhythmic and textual structures. Nevertheless, certain tunes were rather fixed combinations of melodic, rhythmic, and structural elements.

The most common West Ingrian melody type contained one basic poetic line: it was a narrow scale melody that often was syllabic²⁵ and consisted of one musical line of four beats (see example 1 and example 2; IRS 61, 781). It was similar to many Estonian melody types, but was also found in Finland and Karelia. Similar melodies consisting of one line or two lines with five beats (see example 3; IRS 178) are found as well, though these are more

3. Leekuttaja keekuttaja (The Swinger, the Swayer)

Vigla and Okkali (and a little girl)
Savimäki, Soikkola, Ingria
Transcribed by A. A. Borenius in 1877
SKS KRA Borenius 11 a 198, IRS 178
Reinterpreted from the manuscript
by Kati Heinonen



Example 3.

²⁴ For example, see SKVR III:160, 1032, 1038, 1354, 1427.

²⁵ Syllabic here means one or sometimes two notes per syllable.

6. Nyt ol lusti nuoren noissa
(Now It Is Fun for a Young One to Rise)

Anna Kivinen and chorus
Narvon, Ingria
Recorded by Lauri Lahti
in Tallinn in 1937
SKSA L 906
Transcribed by Kati Heinonen

♩=100 al=dl-e1

o - i myD ol lus - ti nuo - ren nois - sa nuo - ren nois - sa
sa myD ol lus - ti nuo - ren nois - sa nuo - ren nois - sa
lus - ti ol lui - ta lui - ku - tel - la lui - ku - tel - la
la lus - ti ol lui - ta lui - ku - tel - la lui - ku - tel - la
jä - se - mi - jä jür - ky - tel - lä jür - ky - tel - lä
lä jä - se - mi - jä jür - ky - tel - lä jür - ky - tel - lä
ken on van - Hem - mi va - ral - le va - ra - le
o o ra - le/a ken on van - Hem - mi va - ral - le/a va - ral - le/a
mie oov vaa - ra - toin tyt - tö va - ra - toin
toin mie oov vaa - ra - toin tyt - tö va - ra - toin
jo ne on kuol - leet kui - si vuot - ta kui - si vuot - ta
o o ta jo ne on kuol - leet kui - si vuot - ta kui - si vuot - ta etc.

Example 6.

8. Oli tässä ennen kylä
(It Used to Be a Village Here)

Unknown singer
Pärspää, Narvusi, Ingria
Transcribed by Armas Launis in 1903
SiBa 60; IRS 624
Reinterpreted from the manuscript
by Kati Heinonen

o - li täs - sä en - nen ky - lä
en - nen ky - lä ei - len ky - lä
nyt on nous - sut nous - sut
nyt on nous - sut nuo - ri met - (sä)

Example 8.

7. Ei miun laulella pittäisi
(I Should not Be Singing)

Anna Mäntyselä and chorus
Mäkiyhti, Soikkala, Ingria
Recorded by Armas Launis in 1906
SKSA 380/38; IRS 547
Transcribed by Kati Heinonen

♩=45 al=e1

e - (e) miun laul - lel - la pit - täi - si eiG i - lo - Da en - sin - kää
ää
ka - Fe - na ma - Fe - na
eiG i - lo - Da en - sin - kää Hä si - nä pit - kä - nä ik - kää
ää
ka - Fe - na ma - Fe - na
si - nä pit - kä - nä ik - kää nä si - nä voon - na kym - me - nä
ää
ka - Fe - na ma - Fe - na
sev vuu - vem ma - Ho - na maan - nu ke - zoi les - ke - nä le - vää
ka

Example 7.

typical in Karelia and Finland than in Ingria. Besides these two basic melody-types, there were dozens of rhythmic patterns and verse structures in use. For instance, verses were sometimes partially repeated or refrains of various kinds were added to the line, as in the verses above. Obviously, the melodies were then longer (see example 5 and example 6; IRS 80, SKSÄ 89b). All these melody types were used both in solo singing and as an alternation between the lead singer and chorus. Sometimes refrains were used instead of repeating the verse, particularly in choral parts. Most of these longer refrains were borrowed from Russian songs, as were many melodies relating to these structures (see example 7 and example 8; IRS 547; 624).²⁶

Since the area was multicultural and has a long and complex history, the origins of one melody or performative feature are often difficult or impossible to trace. Nonetheless, it is

²⁶ See Koski 1974; Launis 1910b; 1910c; Lippus 1995; Rüütel 1977.

evident that the Ingrian melodies and performance practices reflect Finnish and Estonian influences in addition to Karelian ones. They also reflect significant Russian or Slavic influences, and probably also Baltic ones. Many tunes of more recent Russian and Finnish folksongs were also adapted for singing Kalevala-metric poems; sometimes this may even create an impression of a four-line strophic form.²⁷

One melody might be sung in many ways, and many different melodies might be used within one context. Moreover, it is sometimes difficult to draw a line between the different melody-types even for the needs of scholarly analysis. Among the Ingrian genres, the dance-melodies apparently contained the most performative variation. Armas Launis (1904:52) offers this lively description of Ingrian dancing on the basis of his experiences in Soikkola villages:²⁸

When the young people are gathered, the girls here sing poems in the evenings of nearly every Sunday and holiday in between the instrumental dances. Without holding hands, they get into a circle and walk around to the rhythm of the song. The walking changes into dancing if the pace is faster. The most skillful girls take a lead in turns. They sing a line as a solo, and [with the last syllables of the line] the others join as a chorus. They either repeat the words and the tune of the lead singer, or sing a permanent refrain, such as “laadoi laadoi laadoi majoi” or “oi Kaalina, oi Maalina.” The chorus ends with a fermata [a long note] Sometimes the lead singer sings two lines at time, both with the same melody, while the chorus repeats them twice at double speed If the lead singer and the chorus consisted of elder women, they were not walking, but the chorus stood in a half circle in front of the lead singer. In this case the chorus was able to keep the last note even longer, as they were not dancing. In one village of Northern Soikkola, they used a peculiar accompaniment: someone in the chorus kept beating two sticks together.

In performance, even one short melody would often vary. Early collectors often encountered problems with this variation, since many of them were trying to depict melodies with a few lines of notation: how were they to choose “the right” version of the melody from a flow of constant variation?²⁹ Different singers seem to have varied the melody to different degrees, and the scale of variation apparently also depended on the song genre and singing contexts. In choral sections, this variation often caused heterophony or polyphony.

Ingrian singing styles did not please most of the collectors, as the aesthetics of Western classical music did not apply to folk singing at all. For this reason, the collectors complained about the harsh and loud voice production of girls, calling it shouting and screaming, and they found the simple, ever-varying melodies to be boring. Even for a contemporary listener who is aware of ethno poetic and ethnomusicological endeavors to understand poetic and musical cultures in terms of their own aesthetics, some stylistics of Ingrian singing may be difficult to appreciate. Such features include the varying non-classical scale structures, unfamiliar principles of heterophony and rhythmic variation, as well as the constant variation of melody on a narrow

²⁷ Asplund 1992; Harvilahti 1992a:18; 1998:198; Lippus 1995; Rüütel 1998.

²⁸ Translations in the following citations and examples were made by the present author.

²⁹ Heinonen 2008a:256-58; Laitinen 2006:61-65.

scale of tones, or sometimes the simple, non-varying repetition of short, fixed melodic formulae.³⁰

Ingrian Genres and Contexts of Singing

Ingrian singers seem to have been remarkably free to create combinations of different poems and themes. Senni Timonen (2004:24; 2000:634) has analyzed the genres labeled by the singers themselves, as found in the field notes and descriptions of some collectors. She discovered that the singers did not differentiate between lyric and epic, but that these local, emic or indigenous genres were most often named by the context or purpose of singing: a poem or a tune for swinging, for dancing, for the forest, for a bonfire, for weddings, for thanking the cook, and so forth. These categories include both epic and lyric themes, which may either refer directly to the situation at hand or be more vaguely, thematically connected.

Singing would often begin with a specific poem, theme, or formula that referred to the situation at hand, and then continue with others connecting at some level to the atmosphere of the situation or to the mood and habitus of the performers (Timonen 2004:84-157, 238-303). Similarly, Armas Launis (1907:105) states that the melodies were determined more by the situation than by the poem itself. His collections and writings about the subject lead to the suggestion that the singing practices were not clear-cut, and the use of certain melodies was not limited only to certain situations, although it might have been typical of them. Launis (105-07) continues that although locals often categorize their tunes according to singing contexts, these melodic categories do not always coincide with the categories of a musicologist. However, they sometimes do. According to Launis, the most fixed melodies were certain festive and wedding melodies, which are indeed a clearly distinct group. Yet even these melodies would be used in other situations; the categories were not exclusive. In many situations, the variation seems to have been broad and, as Heikki Laitinen³¹ has suggested regarding the songs in the forest, the local typologies may have been based on stylistics not perceivable in notations, such as voice production, movements, pace, and so forth.

The most prominent singing contexts in West Ingria were the weddings and orthodox *praasnikka*-feasts. These feasts were held predominantly in Russian, Izhorian, and Votic villages in honor of the village's patron saint(s), and they often included features of local calendrical rituals. Both the weddings and the *praasnikka*-feasts typically lasted three days. The most fixed combinations of textual and musical elements seem to occur particularly in the poems and melodies connected to these ritualized occasions. On the other hand, these situations created a more general festive frame, and in between the most ritualized moments nearly anything could be sung: lyric, epic, lyrical epic, dancing songs, mocking songs, drinking songs, rhymed folksongs, Russian songs, hymns, and so forth.³²

³⁰ Heinonen 2008a; Laitinen 2003:313-99; 2006:54-65; Niemi 1904:141; Virtanen 1994.

³¹ On oral communication, see also Timonen 2004:99 and n. 82.

³² Anttonen 1987; Alava 1932; Forsberg 1893:53; Heinonen 2005:109-25; Salminen 1917:28-30.

Poems would also be sung while working, passing time, or entertaining each other in various situations. As Launis mentions in his description of Ingrian dance, when the young people had free time they could gather outside to sing and dance nearly every evening. Though women and girls were the most prominent performers, some accounts also mention that boys and men of various ages sang; and though the performance often took the form of alternation between the lead singer and chorus, which was characteristic of the area, the poems were also sung solo.³³

In Ingria, singing practices were thus multiple. Certain “ways of singing”—typical textual, musical, and performative elements—were characteristically used in particular situations, although it was possible to employ them in other contexts. When these elements were used outside the most typical contexts, to my mind they would still refer to these more central contexts. Moreover, there are many possible levels of interperformative reference: melodies, rhythms, forms of repetition, vocal style, movements, formulas, or larger textual units. All of these, in varying degrees, could hint somewhere outside the actual performance. Naturally, many of these relations are impossible to trace from the archival records, but some are still there to be seen.

Festive Singing by the Swing

Swinging was an outdoor amusement for young people during summer evenings; on certain springtime holidays, adults also participated in the singing and swinging. The swings were huge and were not made for children: a swing would accommodate from ten to twenty adults. The speed was sometimes fast, and at times serious injuries occurred. For children, or for other occasions, smaller swings were built. Some researchers have made the connection of swinging to fertility rituals, since swinging marked the beginning of spring and the poems contained references to sowing and harvesting.³⁴

Easter was the occasion that brought the entire village to gather around the swing. Many singers associated swinging songs explicitly with this context. According to Salminen (1929:63), on Easter everyone, even the older men, would take part in singing by the swing, and people would travel long distances to the Soikkola villages. Dancing



Photo 1: Swinging in the Kallivieri village during the Second World War in 1943 (SKS KRA Hämäläinen 533:4).

³³ Enäjärvi-Haavio 1949:149; Harvilahti 1992a:13-20; Heinonen 2008a; Siikala 2000:273-75.

³⁴ Launis 1904:52-53; 1907:107; Salminen 1929:63; 1931a:27-38.

songs could be sung, and a small accordion was sometimes played near the swing.³⁵ Besides Easter, swinging was more generally connected to many calendrical *praasnikka*-feasts.³⁶ The general pattern of these various feasts was rather similar in the different villages. On the first morning, guests and relatives would arrive from nearby areas and gather around the church. After the service, they would all go to separate houses to eat, drink, and entertain themselves. After eating, the young ones would gather outside to dance, sing, walk, play, and swing. The adults could visit several houses to eat, drink, sing, and tell stories. Altogether, feasting lasted from two to four days (Lukkarinen 1911).

The style of singing by the swing seems to be closely connected to the nature of the situation. Salminen points out that on Sundays and holidays the girls would sing as loudly as they could, but during singing on weeknights “the swing would be still or move very slowly, and so the lead singer would hum the verse and others would quietly repeat it in a way that the singing would not be heard in the village” (1931b:530). Collectors and researchers have often emphasized the loudness of Ingrian festive, public singing. Very few descriptions are available of informal, everyday singing (Heinonen 2008a), although, as Siikala has noted (2000:275), “the private or spontaneous arena was no doubt far more common” than the public one.

In West Ingria, certain poetic themes and one type of melody were particularly tightly connected to swinging (Launis 1907:107). The poetic formulas of the beginning of the song would direct the gaze to the swing (“la ka katson liekkuani/leekkuani,” “let me see my swing”), be addressed to the swing itself (“lee lee lee lee leekkuani,” “swi swi swi swi my swing”), or speak to the one or ones who would make it swing. An Izhorian woman Vöglä from Soikkola sang in 1877 (SKVR III:597):

Leekuttaja, keekuttaja,	The swinger, the swayer,
Vaskise vinahuttaja,	the squeaker of the bronze-made!
Kanttaak(a) leekku kahta neittä,	Does the swing carry two maidens,
Kahen neijoi kaatteroja,	the head ribbon of two maidens,
Kolmen neijoin koittania?	the head band of three maidens?
Onko leekku velloin teekku,	Is the swing made by my brother,
Käsi puut källysen tehty,	the handrests by my sister-in-law,
Vitsat on väännetty vävyisen?	the twigs bent by my brother-in-law?
Kuhu leekku lendenöhö,	Where the swing is flying,
Sinne velloi ozran kylvi,	there the brother did sow the barley,
Sisoi sinne niittämähä,	sister [went] there to mow,
Pääsköi päitä perkoimaa,	the swallow to clean the tips,
Sisgaavat sikertammaha.	the nightingales to work.
Älä leekku lankettele	Swing, do not drop [us],
Heliähä heekkamaaha,	to the bright sands:
Marjoi maassa märkänöö	the berry will decay on the ground,

³⁵ SKS KRA A. Laiho 3171.

³⁶ See Timonen 2004:149-51; SKS KRA Borenius e:125, 375; Enäjärvi-Haavio 539, 830-32; A. Laiho 3171.

Veel o velloit pikkaraiset,
Siaret sitä alemmat;
Kuulek kui siar sannoho,
Emoi lapsi laateloho.

[and her] brothers are still small,
the sisters even smaller.
Listen to the sister say
the child of the mother telling.

The singing would start with similar themes that were connected to the actual situation.

Several swinging poems proper continue the context-bound swinging themes with lyrical verses about singing or about worries and plaint. Furthermore, singing could proceed with various epic and lyric poems connected, at some level, to the situation at hand or to the mood of performers (Launis 1907:107; Timonen 2004:149-51). These could include a praise poem for one's own village, a lyrical epic poem about a lazy groom, or a plaint poem about a dead mother.³⁷

Thus separate poems with no swinging themes proper might also be called swinging songs. The Ingrian-Finn singer, Anni Porissa from the Narvusi district, sang some lines of the swinging melody to Vihtori Alava with verses of a lyrical epic poem she had sung ten years earlier for another scholar as a complete and separate poem (SKVR iii:959, 1905). The poem tells about the fate of a maiden who, when she marries, has to leave the house where she has worked for her brother and sister-in-law. Porissa said that the tune would apply to all the swinging songs. A similar observation was recorded from a Votic singer in the Soikkola district in connection with her swinging poem: "Swinging tune. It is almost the Izhorian/Ingrian-Finn one. There are many poems but one melody."³⁸

The particular West Ingrian melody-type of swinging songs consisted of four beats, a narrow scale (3-4 tones), and a melody with an up and down character. This type of melody proceeded line-by-line and had neither refrains nor partial repetitions. The way in which these songs were sung was that the lead singer would sing a verse and the chorus would then repeat it. The melody might vary to some degree during the performance, and thus contain some heterophony in choral parts. Moreover, the singers might sometimes add rhythmic syllables in unstressed metrical positions. This same melody-type with similar textual themes of swinging



Photo 2: The girls of Risumäki village posing still by the swing for the collector A. O. Väisänen in 1914 (Museovirasto 128:11).

³⁷ SKS KRA V. Salminen 2978; SKS KRA Haavio 2558; L. Laiho 4732.

³⁸ "Löekkunootti. Suomen o melkein. On virsii a yks nootti o." Oute from the Joenperä village in Soikkola (SKS KRA Borenius e:200; SKVR III:600).

appears in all central West Ingrian collections,³⁹ although the melody-type was also used with other poems and in other singing contexts.⁴⁰ (See example 2 for this typical swinging melody, IRS 781).

With two exceptions, the West Ingrian swinging songs in all the collections follow this scheme of one-line, narrow-scale, and a four-beat melody. One swinging melody recorded in Narvusi has a slightly different rhythmic scheme, but the singer said it was of a kind that was in use in another area, on the island of Lavansaari in the Gulf of Finland (see example 4; SibA 104; IRS 70). There is also one Central Ingrian Votic swinging song following this same scheme (IRS 33).

4. Lavansaaren liekkulaulu
(The Swinging Song from Lavansaari)

Unknown singer
Kurkela, Narvusi, Ingria
Transcribed by Armas Launis in 1903
SibA 104; IRS 70
Reinterpreted from the manuscript
by Kati Heinonen



Example 4.

Another exception to the typical swinging melody was collected in 1877 by A. A. Borenus from the singers Vöglä and Okkuli in Soikkola (see the example 3).⁴¹ Vöglä said that this was a *leekutusvers*, a poem to set someone swinging with, and it would be sung when swinging on Easter. The poem she sang is an excellent example of the typical themes connected to swinging, and for this reason I chose it for the main example above. However, her melody consists of five beats and is of descending character; that is to say, it is clearly different from the rest of the recorded swinging melodies of the area. Borenus wrote above his transcription of this melody: “A tune to set someone swinging with, also when children are put to sleep.” He also made a very small note: “compare to the proper one above,” which, I think, refers to some swinging tune proper written down earlier.

Thus, this exceptional tune did not represent the most typical swinging song, *the* swinging tune proper. Instead, it was a melody that could *also* be used when swinging but that was associated equally with lullabies. Armas Launis (1904:53) actually said that the melodies proper to a swinging song might be used when putting a baby sleep. Vöglä called the melody “a tune to set one swinging with” (*leekutusnootti*) and not “a swing tune” or “a tune for swinging” (*liekkunootti*), as it was referred to most often.⁴²

A small girl was also present in the interview and she sang with and listened to Vöglä and Okkuli. The presence of this girl seems to have affected the recorded comments and word

³⁹ In SKS KRA Europaeus (1853), Launis (1903, 1906) and Väisänen (1914, 1931). Eino Levón (1903) recorded it in the area of Central Ingria as well. From the mainly Izhorian villages of Central and Western Ingria, see IRS 34, 58, 72, 78, 767, 869, 780, 781; SKS KRA Väisänen 2:60; SKSÄ A 507/9 a; from Votes IRS 33, 45; from Ingrian-Finn villages IRS 95, 421, 651, 765, 800, 805, 811, 822; SKSÄ A 302/97-98. The melodies collected from Ingrian-Finn villages sometimes contain five tones, and in Central Ingria the verses were occasionally added with the syllables “oi” or “joi” appearing at the beginning of the verse.

⁴⁰ For an example, see IRS 55, 62, 65, 766.

⁴¹ SKS KRA Borenus e:198, 6:923.

⁴² The term “to swing” (*liekkua* or *leekkua*) refers to the movements of both the huge swings outside, to the smaller ones made for children and the cradle where the small children slept, but the verb to express the making of the movement has a separate form (*liekuttaa* or *leekkuttaa*), while it likewise refers both to swinging and lulling. See also SKS KRA Laiho L. 5340, 5342.

choices. As they sang their very first song, a wedding tune, Vöglä and Okkuli said: “we sing to children, and also other poems, with this same tune.”⁴³ So, according to these singers, the tune associated with swinging (though not the swinging tune proper), a wedding melody, and apparently, also the poem going along with the swinging could all be used equally when lulling or entertaining a child. This incident provides hints as to the uses of the public and rather formal swinging and wedding songs in the more intimate contexts outside their primary settings.

Situational Stylistics of Lullabies

While the swinging songs represent festive, collective, and public singing, the lullabies were typically intimate, everyday solo singing. Even so, as was noted in the previous section, the melodies and poems of swinging songs could also be used when singing to a child.

On the textual level, a Votic-Izhorian singer, Darja Lehti, made a similar associative connection between lullabies and swinging songs as did Vöglä and Okkuli on the melodic level in the previous section. In 1930, Lehti sang a short swinging theme in between her numerous lullabies for Väinö Salminen (SKS KRA Salminen 2899, 2900):⁴⁴

Lē lē lēkkuja!	Swi swi my swing!
tšen on tehnyt lēkun?	Who has made the swing?
Armaz on aizat pannut - - -	The loved one has made the shafts - - -

The dashes marked by Salminen at the end of the verses may either suggest that he thought that the singer did not remember the rest of the poem or, in this instance, more probably that the singer moved directly to the next theme:

Lēkuta mie lasta pēntä,	I swing my little child,
lekuta ja laulan:	I swing and sing:
makkā pēni lapsikkene,	sleep my little child;
tänä vōna tätä lasta,	this year this child,
teisel vōtta teista lasta.	another year another child.

⁴³ SKS KRA Borenius e:193, 6:917; of the use of the wedding poems as lullabies, see SKS KRA Mannonen 11109.

⁴⁴ See also SKS KRA Salminen 2891-95; 2901-05. Lehti said that the songs in her home village of Joenperä were the same as the songs in (Izhorian) Soikkola villages (SKS KRA Haavio 2303). It is important to note that Lehti sang only lullabies and told some charms (for curing children) to Salminen. She did this by using some Votic words and sounds ([tš]) in some poems though her repertoire of poems was large and often her dialect in songs was closer to Izhorian (see for example Haavio 2486-501; A. Laiho 2218-26, L. Laiho 5131-36). She seems to have been in the mood for lullabies that day, or it could be that Väinö Salminen tried to record Votic songs from her, and while most of her poems were similar to Izhorian poems of Soikkola villages, some lullabies contained Votic features.

The first short part makes use of common swinging themes and the other incorporates common lullaby themes, but they both contain a similar vocabulary of swing and swinging, and they were told or sung to the collector one after the other. In this session, Lehti seems to have been performing most of her poems in such an improvisatory way that Salminen even noted in connection to an earlier poem: “About swinging a child. Half-metric performance. Improvised?”⁴⁵ The meter of nearly all of the songs recorded in this interview is unusually free. For instance, the first three lines above “miss” from one to two stressed syllables in the middle of the line, and the first two lines of the second part would actually make a perfect half-strophe of a rhymed folksong. Yet, Darja Lehti was an experienced performer, and when singing for other collectors she ordinarily used rather firm Kalevala-metric structures.⁴⁶ It seems that in lullabies, it would be possible to use metrically and thematically freer forms than in other situational genres.

Lullabies have not been widely recorded. As an informal, intimate genre for children, they were not of central interest to the collectors, and the singers themselves probably did not think of the lullabies as the first songs to sing for outsiders. However, there are some accounts and examples of the improvisatory character of texts, melodies, and song structures in this genre. My favorite description is from Vihtori Alava, who sketched a short notation in his notebook in 1892, and wrote a brief description in shorthand: “In Oussimäki village Olena sang to a child with this melody, something she hummed in which there were no fixed words.”⁴⁷ This sketch of notation seems to represent one basic type of Kalevala-metric melody, but Alava did not record the varying or unclear words of this “humming.” He either felt they were not worth documenting or was not able to catch them, even in shorthand. Olena was apparently not performing for him, but either putting a baby to sleep or entertaining it. The verb “hum,” *hymistä* in Finnish, may reflect various aspects of a song: an informal attitude, a quiet and soft voice, obscurity, a lack of fixed structures, or the use of meaningless sounds. Indeed, many of these features appear in the later recordings of lullabies.⁴⁸

Launis (1907:110) wrote the following on the melodic variation of lullabies: “There do not seem to be any fixed melodies for lullabies, but instead one often hears very pretty improvisations from a mother sitting next to the cradle.” The collections contain several rather simple melodies and structures that appear in connection with textual lullaby themes: many of these melodies are four- or five-beat, and one- or two-line basic melodies with no partial repetitions or rhythmic prolongations, but no one type seems to be the most common (Heinonen 2008a:259, n. 12). Despite Launis’ admiring comment on improvising mothers, the two recordings he made of lullabies are rather fixed. Either he was not interested in recording these improvisational songs, since he was seeking constant melody-types for international

⁴⁵ SKS KRA Salminen 2895.

⁴⁶ For an exception, see SKS KRA A. Laiho 2351, which begins as a Kalevala-metric poem and ends up as a rhymed song.

⁴⁷ SKS KRA Alava VIIb:217; see also SKS KRA Borenus e:182-83.

⁴⁸ See Heinonen 2008a:256-61.

9. Nuku nuku yksi silmä
(Sleep Sleep the One Eye)

Anna Kivisoo and chorus
Repino, Narva, Ingria
Recorded by Lari Lahti
in Tallinn in 1937
SKSÄ 196
Transcribed by Kati Kallio



mu - ku mu - ku yk - si sil - (i) - mä tor - (o) - ku tor - (o) - ku toi - ne sil - (i) - mä
bai bai bai bai
muk - ku - kaa mo - lem - mat sil - mät (i) saiss - si - si mum - ma - si maa - tak - see
ää ää ää ää
saiss - si - si mum - ma - si maa - tak - see ja ky - lts - sä käy - väk - see
bau bau bau
poi - ka luk - kuu pai - ta löyh - kää
ää ää ää ää
poi - ka luk - kuu pai - ta löyh - kää vi - pu vin - ku vauh - te - rai - nen
tuu tuu tuu
vi - pu vin - ku vauh - ta - rai - nen tu - pa kuu - si - ne ku - mi - soo
ää ää ää ää

Example 9.

comparisons, or the recording situation froze the singers.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, variation and improvisation were not the only stylistic possibilities of this genre. There were also rather fixed textual themes, and some singers would sing without much variation in the melody.

In some lullaby recordings, a peculiar structural variation occurs that is not found in other Ingrian songs. In 1937, Anna Kivisoo performed part of a chain of lullaby themes for recording on a shellac disk. She sang this poem in sections of one or two verses with an ever-changing refrain between them. The refrain consisted of various meaningless syllables and its temporal length varied, yet the poetic meter of the verses proper was mainly stable and clear with the final syllables of the verse occasionally left unsung, in contrast to Darja Lehti's previous song (see example 9):⁵⁰

Nuku nuku yksi sil(i)mä,
tor(o)ku tor(o)ku toine sil(i)mä,
bai bai bai bai
nukkukaa molemmat silmät (i),
saissisi mammasi maataksee,
ääää ä
saissisi mammasi maataksee,
ja kylässä käyväkseen.
bau bau bau
Poika l'iekkuu paita löyhkää,
ää ää ää ää
poika l'iekkuu paita löyhkää,
vipu vinkuu vaahterainen,
l'uu l'uu l'uu
vipu vinkuu vaahterainen,
tupa kuusine kumisoo.
ää ää ää ää

Sleep, sleep, the one eye,
nod, nod, the other eye,
bai bai bai bai
sleep, both eyes (and),
you mother could get some rest,
ääää ä
you mother could get some rest,
and could go to village.
bau bau bau
The boy is swinging, his shirt is swaying,
ää ää ää ää
the boy is swinging, his shirt is swaying,
the maple-made lever is squeaking,
l'uu l'uu l'uu
the maple-made lever is squeaking,
the spruce-made room is peeling.
ää ää ää ää

⁴⁹ SKSÄ A 300/42 b, 301/50 b.

⁵⁰ SKSÄ L 90 c.

This type of structural variation, with sections of both one line and two lines and a varying refrain in between, is not seen in other Ingrian song genres. Although there are a number of possible structures and refrains, these usually remain fixed within one performance of a song. I interpret this as one aspect, or one possibility, of the improvisatory character of the lullabies.

Poetic themes in Kivisoo's song refer to several genres. The first two verses were, besides a common lullaby theme, also a central formula in some prose fairytales.⁵¹ Here, the theme is prolonged with a lullaby theme of getting some rest when the child falls asleep. On other occasions, Kivisoo connected these themes to different poetic chains.⁵² The verses about the swinging boy usually belong centrally to the epic poem about the war between two brothers, Untarmo and Kalervo, in which the small son of Kalervo is the only member of his family to survive.⁵³ After the war, he is found happily swinging in his cradle, and he copes with all of Untarmo's subsequent hostilities. Different themes connected with this epic poem are also found in other lullabies.⁵⁴

Thus, the lullabies drew from various textual and melodic sources and contained possibilities for variation on many levels. This is particularly evident when they are contrasted to the structurally and melodically stable swinging songs. The stylistic differences between the swinging songs and lullabies arise for the most part from their typical singing situations. It was a festive practice to perform with a loud vocal quality and participate in coordinated group singing, whereas it was more intimate to produce the quiet, loosely structured humming to a child. Informal context creates a freer, unceremonious space for singing. For a child, singing calls for a softer voice, and solo singing permits more improvisation than does a choral performance. Incidentally, there is a stark contradiction between the informal character of lullabies and the rather elevated atmosphere of recording situations. The recording often directed "the focus of the performance to the contents of the text," as Lotte Tarkka (2005:101) has observed, and thus some performative structures may be left unsung or unrecorded. Consequently, the particular song structure with changing refrains used by Anna Kivisoo was recorded from her, and some other singers, only by Lauri Laiho.⁵⁵

Finally, I suggest that by using textual and melodic swinging or wedding themes while lulling a child, the performance arenas (interpretive frames) of these typical, festive singing situations are evoked. Thus, the presence of a small child may be interperformatively linked to his or her future as a young girl or boy in festive occasions, or the singer may evoke her own recollections of these situations. In a similar way, by adopting a short, epic theme, the mythical character of the son of Kalervo may be evoked and associated with the child.

⁵¹ SKS KRA Alava VIA:759, 980.

⁵² SKS KRA L. Laiho 5340, 5340.

⁵³ See, e.g., SKVR III:701-15, 1280-91.

⁵⁴ Timonen 2004:n. 141; SKS KRA Haavio 2434; see also IRS 221, 849.

⁵⁵ SKSÄ 90b, 90c; SKS KRA L. Laiho 4720, 4986, 5133; see also K. Salminen 98, 99.

Various Uses of One Poem

In this last section, I present various uses of one lyrical epic poem. By analyzing contextual comments, performative features, and intertextual links recorded in archival recordings, I show how a single poetic theme may be subject to nearly opposite interpretations and thereby provoke various associations, and that these interpretations and associations may be created on the various levels of a performance.

The Ingrian-Finn Valpuri Vohta sang the poem of *The Sad Widow (Leino leski)* twice in 1936 and in 1937 to collectors, maintaining the same song structure and the main points in her contextual comments.⁵⁶ At that time, Vohta was also singing in the choir when the song was recorded on shellac disk in 1937 (see example 10).⁵⁷ Vohta was consistent with the textual and structural elements of the poem. Her two solo versions follow the same song structure as the sound-recorded choral version: she sang two verses and repeated the end of the latter verse twice. The chorus should then sing these partial repetitions, as she mentioned to both collectors. By pointing to the alternation between the lead singer and the chorus, she emphasized the collective performance of this particular song, though the emphasis may have also partly been derived from the interest of these collectors in the performance practices of these songs (Enäjärvi-Haavio 1949; Simonsuuri 1972). Vohta sung this version to the first collector, Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio (SKS KRA Enäjärvi-Haavio 467):

10. Leino leski
(The Sad Widow)

Mari Vaher and chorus
Narvusi, Ingria
Recorded by Lauri Laiho
in Tallinn in 1937
SKS L 87c
Transcribed by Kati Kallio

♩=65 gl=gl

He - li - se He - li - ja met - sä ko - mi - se ko - mi - ja kor - pi
ja kor - pi
ja ko - mi - a kor - pi ja ko - mi - a kor - pi
kolt o - li kor(o) - ves - sa la - Het - ta kolt o - li loh - ta lah - te - Hes - sä
te - Hes - sä
loh - ta lah - te - Hes - sä loh - ta lah - te - Hes - sä
kolt o - li loh - ta lah - te - Hes - sä kolt o - li lin - nal - la la - Het - ta
la la - Het - ta
lin - nal - la la - Het - ta lin - nal - la la - Het - ta
yksi o - li nuo - ren nei - jon lin - na toin o - li nuo - ren mor(o) - si - jam - men
mor(o) - si - jam - men
nuo - ren mor - si - jam - men nuo - ren mor - si - jam - men
etc.

Example 10.

⁵⁶ SKS KRA Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio 467; A. Laiho 2291.

⁵⁷ SKS L 87 c by Mari Vaher (and Vohta singing in the chorus) is one of the only sound recordings of this poem from West Ingria. However, the Izhorian Jeodokia Räkälä, with a choir from Narvusi district, sang the beginning of the poem with the very same structure and similar melody recorded on the phonogram by Armas Otto Väisänen in Helsinki in 1931 (SKS A 507/8b). Considering the opening formulas of IRS 221, 624, and 849, these poems may also have continued with the same theme, but there is no way to ascertain this.

Helise heliä metsä,	Tinkle, the bright forest,
Kumise komia korpi,	peal, the handsome woods!
∴ Joi komia korpi ∴	∴ <i>joi</i> the handsome woods ∴
Korvessa kolmet lähettä,	In the woods three springs,
Kolmet (-i-) lohta lähteessä,	three salmon in the spring,
∴ Lohta lähteessä ∴	∴ salmon in the spring ∴
[Kolme lohta lähteessä]	[three salmon in the spring,]
Kolme linnaha lohessa,	three castles in the salmon:
∴ Linnaa ka lohessa ∴	∴ castles in the salmon ∴
Yks on nuoren neion linna,	One castle of a young maiden,
Toinen nuoren morsiamen,	another of a young bride,
∴ Nuoren morsiamen ∴	∴ of a young bride ∴
Kolmas lesken leina linna.	third one a widow's sad castle.
Kump on nuoren neion linna,	The one of the young maiden,
[∴ Nuoren neion linna ∴]	[∴ of the young maiden ∴]
[Kump on nuoren neion linna,]	[The one of the young maiden,]
Se on kullalla kuvattu.	it is coated with gold.
∴ Kullalla kuvattu.	∴ coated with gold ∴
Kump on nuoren morsiamen,	The one of the young bride
Se on hoppeel huolitettu,	it is netted with silver.
∴ Hoppeel huolitettu ∴	∴ netted with silver ∴
Kump on lesken leina linna,	The one of the widow's sad castle
Se on vaskella valettu,	it is casted with copper.
∴ Vaskella valettu ∴	∴ casted with copper ∴
En oo lesken leina linna,	I am not a widow's sad castle,
Miul on kolmet vaa pojutta:	I have three sons:
∴ Kolmet vaa pojutta ∴	∴ three sons ∴
Yks on Ruotsissa rovasti,	One is a cleric in Sweden,
Toinen piispa pappilassa,	another a bishop in the parsonage,
∴ Piispa pappilassa ∴	∴ bishop in the parsonage ∴
[Toinen piispa pappilassa,]	[another a bishop in the parsonage,]
Kolmaas on kotinen herra.	the third one is a master at home.
∴ Joi kotinen herra ∴	∴ <i>joi</i> master at home ∴

This poem begins with a call for the forest to tinkle and peal and continues with a surrealistic picture of three springs in the forest, three salmon in each spring, and three castles in the salmon. The poem describes the conditions of women in different social positions: the young maiden's castle is made of gold, the young bride's of silver, and the widow's of copper (or tinplate in other versions). The widow is called sad, but she proudly denies this label because she has three sons. Typically, the poem continues with the death of the sons and reiterates the widow's insecurity and sorrow; this has often been interpreted as a punishment for the widow's pride (Harvilahti 2004:202).

Vohta did not sing this very common, sad ending. Consequently, her two versions could be interpreted as expressing the proud self-praise of a woman with sons if we did not have any additional information. However, sorrow seems to be lingering beneath Vohta's contextual description and interpretation of this song (A. Laiho 2291; SKS KRA Enäjärvi-Haavio 467):

In weddings, when already tired, we went to the table, put a bottle of liquor on it, and so we sang hand to cheek. This is a sad song. In summertime, sitting by the side of the river, this was a song to be sung from a sitting position.

When walking around the village the girls did not sing this. This would not be sung while walking or dancing. Women would sing this on Saint George's day [when women had their own *praasnikka* feast]. Similarly, this would be sung at weddings, when the wedding songs proper had already been sung or . . . , for example, while sitting around the table after the "*tunsit tulla*" ["you knew to come," a guiding song for the bride] was sung.

The contextual information given by Vohta suggests that this poem did not belong to any fixed situational subgenre, but could be sung in several situations—in weddings after the wedding songs proper, on a women's feast, or by the riverside. Nonetheless, Vohta was quite strict about how, by whom, and where this sad poem could be sung. For the collectors, Vohta always sang it with a certain choral repetition of the verses. Furthermore, adult women sang this poem, not unmarried girls, and Vohta claimed it would be sung only when sitting, and certainly not while dancing or walking. The sad tone of the song may also be anticipated in the sound-recording, in which the singing of women is even, surely not dance-like, and the tone of their voices is serious (SKSÄ A 87c; see the eCompanion, 8).

The same poem was sung to Lauri Laiho in 1938 by another Ingrian-Finn singer from the very same Kallivieri village, Maria Otsa, but Otsa sang her version with a rather different contextual description. According to her, this poem was sung by young girls while dancing in a circle by the river.⁵⁸ The description provided by Otsa is nearly the opposite to that of Vohta, even though the text proper is almost the same word-for-word. Two lines of the opening formula sung by Otsa (but not found in Vohta's version) reinforce the performance arena she described: "now it is fun for a young one to rise [dancing] / fun to make one's bones move."⁵⁹ As this short beginning formula anticipates, the life of a maiden is characterized in many poems and laments as the happiest and the most care-free time in her life, while the fate of a married woman is seen as a renouncement of a maiden's own will and a beginning of her worries and hard work.⁶⁰ Maidenhood was, ideally at least, a time to dance, to sing, and to be happy, and it was to this time of their youth that the older singers often referred when Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio and Aili Laiho asked them about the contexts and uses of their songs.⁶¹ Many poems about the unhappy

⁵⁸ SKS KRA Laiho 4832: "When we youngsters went to the riverside, then we danced in a circle and sang."

⁵⁹ "Täs on lusti nuoren noissa, kaunis kassapään karata."

⁶⁰ See e.g. Nenola-Kallio 1982; Nenola 2002; Timonen 2004:117-25; SKVR III:904, 1015.

⁶¹ See e.g. SKS KRA A. Laiho 2094.

fate of married women have undoubtedly sounded different to unmarried girls than to married women. From the maiden's point of view, the poem of the sad widow could be interpreted as a warning or as a praise of her own happy life. For a married woman, the same poem may speak of an impending future—or of a *fait accompli*—as a widow who is without a son and unsheltered. While Vohta's version would be, as she states, a performance by the married women, Otsa's would be an interpretation from a maiden's point of view. However, the case here is more complex.

Besides age groups, these two opposite interpretations may point to regional differences. The collectors marked the village of Kallivieri as a place of origin for both Vohta's and Otsa's poems. Whereas Vohta was born in Kallivieri and had spent four years with her husband's family in Vyötermaa, Otsa was born in Vyötermaa and had moved to Kallivieri when she was married. Vohta reported: "I spent four years in Vyötermaa. The dialect of songs was different there." I interpret her comment as encompassing not only the dialect, but also some stylistic and performative features of poems.⁶² Thus, the different interpretations might also be attributed to the regional conventions of use.

Descriptions contrary to the one provided by Vohta are also provided by some Izhorian singers of the same Narvusi district. Before singing the poem, Anna Kivisoo reported: "When the girls went together into the forest to eat berries [they sang this song]."⁶³ Here, as Senni Timonen

(2004:100-02) has suggested, the opening formula, "Tinkle, the bright forest," may connect the poem to the local category of "the songs in the forest," which were often sung with particular stylistic features. Another singer, Maria Hauki, sang two poems to Lauri Laiho with a Russian-derived refrain "Saadul mois saadul, seedenna saadu" ("my green garden") that was used in Ingrian songs connected to ritualized walking through the village during *praasnikka*-feasts and weddings; the second of Hauki's poems was the song of the sad widow.⁶⁴ She did not use refrains of any kind with the other poems she sang to Laiho. The melody-type associated with this refrain is of a similar character in all the collected materials (see example 11; IRS 234). Poetic themes connected with these melodies and refrains often praise one's own

11. Lähemmä läpi kyläsen
(We Shall Get through the Village)

Anna Mirmintär and chorus
Mäkkylä, Sorkkula, Ingria
Recorded by Armas Launis in 1906.
SKSA 300/56a, IRS 234
Transcribed by Kai Heinonen



♩=100 e1=e1

[lä - hem - mä] lä - Bi ky(l) - läi - ze
oi saa - du saa - du se - len - noi saa - du

lä - Bi (vaa) un - lit - san u(t) - toi - sen
oi saa - du saa - du se - len - noi saa - du

lä - Bi (vaa) kaa - ras - san ka - Hes - san
oi saa - du saa - du se - len - noi saa - du

kell ov (vaa) lin - no - ja i(k) - kää - vä
oi saa - du saa - du se - len - noi saa - du

kell ov (vaa) kai - Ho kaa - ras - ta - Ha
oi saa - du saa - du se - len - noi saa - du

Example 11.

⁶² SKS KRA L. Laiho 5409.

⁶³ SKS KRA L. Laiho 5324.

⁶⁴ SKS KRA L. Laiho 5213; See e.g. Launis 1907:107; IRS 227-39; SKS KRA Enäjärvi-Haavio 504, 905; A. Laiho 2147, 2210, 2337; L. Laiho 4736.

village and mock the other villages. Hauki's first poem with this refrain begins with a common opening formula often connected to this melody-type: "My village, my castle / my very best place"⁶⁵ followed by praise of her own village. Less typically, the poem continues with a sad lyrical theme: "I should not be singing, I just buried my dear one." Immediately thereafter, Hauki sang the poem of the sad widow with the very same refrain. Similarly, Maria Tuisk combined this poem with another opening formula that is usually connected to the same melody-type and walking through the village: "Let's get through the village / through the misty road."⁶⁶

All these Izhorian singers appear to have associated the poem with girls (or women) who were walking either in a forest or through a village, while one Ingrian-Finn, Maria Otsa, associated it with girls dancing, and the other Ingrian-Finn, Valpuri Vohta, with women sitting. The poem of the sad widow was also recorded from many other West Ingrian singers, both Izhor and Ingrian-Finn (Harvilahti 2004). These poems contain no contextual information, but they do reveal some interesting variation: The poem of the sad widow may be sung separately⁶⁷ or combined with other lyric and lyrical epic themes.⁶⁸ In the latter cases, the associative links are diverse—one singer even connects the sons of the widow to the characters of the tragic epic poem on the war between the brothers Kalervo and Untarmo (SKVR XV:805). Across this variation, the poems most often describe or complain of the fate of a married woman (SKVR III: 1445, 1509), and the general atmosphere of textually linked poems is mostly tragic or sad.

There are two additional cases related to the sad interpretations of this theme, although these poems contain no direct contextual information. Two singers, Izhorian Naastoi from Soikkola, and Ingrian-Finn Juljaana Pohjalainen from Narvusi, both sang the basic theme of the sad widow with no special opening formulas, structures, or associated themes (or at least none that were recorded).⁶⁹ While singing their poems, both mentioned the one-year period of mourning after the death of a close relative. "Even the small accordion remains hung on the wall, [during that period] it cannot be played," Pohjalainen explained. For her part, Naastoi stated: "when people die here, we mourn: we will not wear any red, we will not sing or dance." Both felt it was necessary to explain this habit to the collectors while singing the poem of the sad widow.

At first sight, the sad and tragic tone in these comments and the associated themes evoked by the song would seem to contradict the notion of girls dancing as described by Maria Otsa. Nevertheless, in Ingria people could also dance to sad and tragic songs. In the 1937 sound recordings, the women started one song with the same formula Otsa used, "now it is fun for a young one to rise," and they then sang their poem with a fast melody and a partial repetition of a verse that they used for other dancing-songs as well (SKSÄ L 89b). On the shellac disk, the women sing in a rhythmic, dance-like way, and yet in this particular poem they sound deadly serious. The poem says it is fun for those whose parents are alive, and describes the longing for a

⁶⁵ "Kylähäni, linnähäni, parahaini paikkahaini."

⁶⁶ "Lähemmä läpi kyläisen, läpi uulitsan utuisen" (SKS KRA L. Laiho 5913; see also SKVR III:2799).

⁶⁷ SKS KRA Haavio 2530, L. Laiho 4803; SKVR III:1817.

⁶⁸ SKS KRA L. Laiho 5112; SKVR III:1407, 1445, 1509; 2799; XV:805; see also Harvilahti 2004:206.

⁶⁹ SKVR III:2293; see Harvilahti 2004:202-06; SKS KRA Haavio 2530.

deceased mother in terms of singing and crying on her grave. Similarly, in 1972 Natalja Ivanovna Lukina sang a lyrical plaint poem with the very same melody and song structure and with a fast tempo and rhythmic intonation, and commented that it was a song for dancing in a circle (ERA Gomon 1972:42/3). She began the singing with another common opening formula that accompanies dancing, “Let us make one circle,” and continued with Otsa’s formula: “Here it is fun for a young to rise,” followed by lyrical themes: “I did not promise to sing [. . .] / my mouth is singing / my heart mourning [. . .], I just buried my dear one [. . .].”⁷⁰ As may be heard on the tape, she wept while singing. Lukina was also an accomplished lamenter, so she was able to perform in that style. So, along with light and happy lyrical themes, dancing in Ingria also included sad poems, which could be sung to rhythmic and fast dancing-tunes, although it seems to have been more common or typical to sing sad and tragic poems with slow melodies or while sitting (Enäjärvi-Haavio 1949:157-59).

Though the two descriptions of the use of this poem given by Valpuri Vohta to Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio and Aili Laiho are the most complex descriptions in all of the early collected material, they do not seem to be complete explanations of the uses of the poem. Vohta links the poem to several situations, while the central points in her description, namely the women singing while sitting and the weddings as a central performance arena, remained the same, even for different interviewers. Even these descriptions are incomplete accounts of all the possibilities of use in West Ingria, in the Narvusi district or even in Kallivieri village.

The contextual or interpretive comments by other singers and collectors are far more laconic. It seems that when asked about the contexts of singing a poem, the singers often referred to one particular situation or a way of singing that was central to them rather than giving an exhaustive explanation. These individual interpretations might have been shared by the singer’s age group, ethnic group, village, family, or all of them together, but they do not always represent the only possible interpretive frame for a single poem. On the basis of scarce contextual information, it is impossible to say which interpretations might have been most common and which were only local, personal, or produced by the interview situation. It is noteworthy that despite the different interpretations of *The Sad Widow* given by Valpuri Vohta and Anna Kivisoo, they could sing the poem as members of the same choir.⁷¹

Interperformative Relationships

A song carries the meanings of its past (or typical) performances while it is constantly reinterpreted (Foley 1995:xi). References to earlier performances may appear on various levels

⁷⁰ “Tehkää yksi ympärikkö, ympärikkö [. . .] Täss on lusti nooren noissa, nooren noissa / lusti ol luita liikutella, liikutella [. . .] el luvannut laulaella, laulaella [. . .] vast mie kullan hautasin i, hautasin i [. . .].”

⁷¹ In 1937 the six singers, including Valpuri Vohta, Anna Kivisoo, and Darja Lehti, who were born in the different villages of Ropsu, Kallivieri, and Joenperä and were representing Izhors, Ingrian-Finns and Izhor-Votes, were able to coordinate their singing styles. Nevertheless, they did have some difficulties in integrating some aspects of Ingrian-Finn and Izhorian poetic language and ways of performance, and in some songs the others were not able to sing with the only Ingrian-Finn Valpuri Vohta as their lead singer (Laiho 1940:229; Simonsuuri 1972:44). On idiolectal, dialectal, and pan-traditional variation of poetic language, see Foley 1990:288-328.



Photo 3: West Ingrian singers returning from the recording trip to Tallinn in 1937. Valpuri Vohta, the collector Aili Laiho, Mari Vahter, Tatjana Jegorov, Anna Kivisoo, and Darja Lehti (SKS KRA Järvinen).

of the song: the content, meter, melodic and rhythmic structures, refrains, song structure, voice production, and so on. To discuss these relations, especially when dealing with their purely extra-linguistic or nonlinguistic features, the term *interperformative* seems to be more appropriate than *intertextual*.

Ingrian singers created the main categories of song genres according to the following poetic forms: Kalevala-metric poems, laments, rhymed Finnish folksongs, and various kinds of Russian folksongs. All of these genres had distinctive features of meter and form; they were characteristically sung to different melodies, and were partly used in different typical contexts. Nonetheless, poetic and melodic formulas and themes were borrowed even between these main forms. When the local conceptions of these mega-genres are analyzed more carefully, as Senni Timonen (2004) has done with the Kalevala-metric poems, the picture becomes more blurred and complicated. This is because singers did not mark any difference between the lyric and epic Kalevala-metric poems that could indeed mix in various ways. They used instead terms referring to typical singing contexts, such as swinging, walking in the forest, or dancing. These situational and often action-oriented subgenres consisted of context-bound themes on the one hand, and of a mass of loosely linked poems on the other.

In certain festive contexts, such as weddings and some *praasnikka*-feasts, the connections between poetic themes and melodies of the central songs were rather fixed. Thus, the main wedding and swinging tunes are clearly recognizable in the vast archival material, where the

same contexts, formulas or themes, and musical structures are linked repeatedly. In the swinging songs studied here, variation took place mainly on the textual level: after the contextually bound opening themes, a wide range of themes and poems could be sung to the same swinging tune. The singing took the form of an alternation between the lead singer and the chorus that resulted in rather fixed musical structures.

When singing for a child, the connections between the poetic themes, melodies, and structures of the song were much looser than in more formal contexts. In this intimate situation, the singers had great freedom to employ various registers, and to connect poetic and melodic themes and structures as they pleased. Occasionally, both the melodies and the textual themes could be used as interperformative links to more formal situations of swinging and weddings. Nevertheless, the scale and level of variation would depend heavily on the singer and on his or her mood. For example, the singer could improvise the words, the melody, or the song structure, and combine various kinds of themes. She could use either common lullaby themes or poems having nothing to do textually with the actual situation; she could sing without melodic variation or use rather free musical structures. There does not seem to be any particular melody-type for lullabies; several song structures could be used. The lullabies seem to have been a rather open field for improvisation and for the various elements typically connected to other situations. The improvisational character of this genre may have permeated many levels, including poetic themes, meter, melodies, refrains, and song structures. Both swinging song and lullaby genres are open for variation, but the possibilities for this variation take place partly on different levels.

A single poem may be interpreted within several situational genres. The singers set the poem of the sad widow in several situational or interpretive frames by incorporating different initial formulas, associations to other epic and lyrical poetic themes, verbal explanations, and by using different melodies, refrains, and song structures. Since this poem was not tightly connected to any ritual context, it was receptive to various interpretations and associations, and could be sung and interpreted by different social groups. One singer said that it was a sad song to be performed by married women while sitting still, another remarked that it was sung by the young girls when dancing by the riverside, and yet others connected it to the ritualized walk through the village or to an informal walk in the forest. The sad and tragic tone of this poem still prevails and is reinforced by several contextual comments and associated poetic themes. Even the connection to the dancing girls does not neutralize its sad tone, since in Ingria sad and tragic poems may accompany dancing. The multitude of interperformative references connected to this poem suggests that individual contextual comments were not even meant to be all-embracing. When the singer mentioned a certain performance context or used a certain song structure or melody while rendering a poem, she actually provided some clues about her personal or situational interpretation of that song.

In Ingrian oral poetry, local genres seem to build sometimes on rather fixed, sometimes on relatively vague combinations of various textual, melodic, contextual, and performative features. As the examples above illustrate, no categories or rules occur without exceptions. As Bauman (2004), Foley (1995), Harvilahti (1992a), Timonen (2004), and others have suggested, it is often more accurate to speak about tendencies, ranges or spectrums of variation than of strict rules or fixed categories. The systems of communication are flexible, but to understand them, and thus to understand what is actually said, we need to understand the tendencies, patterns, and

models that occur in the background of communication, as Anna-Leena and Jukka Siikala (2005:18) have proposed.⁷²

Ingrian singing culture contains both relatively constant features and endless variation, and the dynamics between these two aspects are not random and certainly are not meaningless. By analyzing a large and relatively thick corpus of poems, melodies, and descriptions that have been collected from many singers by many collectors over a long period of time, it is possible both to identify certain typical or constant features and to suggest some local, situational, or even personal interpretations (Tarkka 2005; Timonen 2004). This analysis of musical and other non-textual levels of performance enriches our understanding of various referential ties in oral poetry. Accordingly, the references between performances, and thus the meanings of a song, do not take place at the textual level only.⁷³

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⁷² See also DuBois 2006:243; Tarkka 2005:384-88.

⁷³ I am greatly indebted to John Miles Foley for suggesting the concept of *interperformativity* and discussing many of my unfinished thoughts. Senni Timonen, Lauri Harvilahti, Anna-Leena Siikala, Heikki Laitinen, Frog, and Venla Sykäri have provided most valuable comments on several stages of the work, and Kate Moore has guided me on English language usage.

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